

The Abbey Parish Newsletter

28th June, 2020 Saints Peter and Paul

Full details of times of Services are posted in the Abbey and the other churches in the parish

Confessions: In grave necessity, please telephone the parish priest to arrange a meeting. Facebook page: search for Buckfast Abbey Parish

Liturgical Calendar:

Monday – Thursday	Feria
Friday	St. Thomas, Apostle
Saturday	The Chideock Martyrs

“Oremus pro invicem”

Please pray for those who are sick:
Geraldine Thompson Pat Hedges
Margaret McAvoy Fred Cooke
Bob Beard

If you or someone you know would like to be included here, please contact Fr. Francis



Please pray for those whose anniversary occurs at this time:

Ethel Ward-Smith; Olive Davidson; Rev. Edward Theed; Maria Fitch;
Dom Augustine Keniry; Annie Smith; Dom Stanislaus Kenley; Aldyth Perse;
Gertrude Reavey; Gwendoline Laity; Charles Eugster; Ethel Desmond; John Roberts;
Annie Lowe; Mary Parnell; Olive Parr; Stephen Hunt; Nora Mack;
Dom John Baptist Archer; Jennifer Baker; Charles Hale; Shirley Fidock; Mary Halle;

May they rest in peace

Live-streaming:

Sundays	
Matins	6.45 a.m.
Lauds	7.45 a.m.
Holy Mass	10.30 a.m.
Vespers & Benediction	6.30 p.m.
Compline	8.00 p.m.
Monday - Saturday	
Matins	6.30 a.m.
Lauds	7.45 a.m.
Holy Mass	9.00 a.m.
Vespers	6.30 p.m.
Compline	Mon-Fri: 8 p.m.

You can view online in any of these places:

www.buckfast.org.uk/live

[Youtube.com/c/BuckfastAbbey](https://www.youtube.com/c/BuckfastAbbey)

Facebook @buckfastabbeyofficialsite

If you are self-isolating and need help getting food or medicine, please give Fr. Francis a call.

Opening of churches for private prayer in the Buckfast Abbey Parish.

This week, churches in the parish will be open for private prayer from 1100 until noon as follows:

Monday and Thursday:	South Brent
Tuesday and Friday:	Ashburton
Wednesday:	Buckfastleigh

Beginning to celebrate Holy Mass with a congregation: Please see overleaf for Fr. Francis' reflection on this.

Phone line for prayer:
call 01364 72768

Parish Priest: Fr. Francis Straw;
01364 645526;
parish@buckfast.org.uk

News from our Parish School (Courtesy of Mitzi)
<http://www.st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk/>

For those interested in the statistics, this week the number of children in school each day was approaching forty - out of a total of one hundred and eleven on roll. Next week we are expecting a bit more of an increase (or is that what is called an "uptick" these days?) as we have been authorised by the Academy Trust to invite Year 5 children to return. As you might expect, there are still many families who do not have the confidence to send their children back just yet. However, with just over three weeks to go until the end of term, they are having to weigh their concerns against the potential benefits of their children having a brief return to school now or returning after almost six months off in September. It is a tough dilemma to which there is no right answer and probably comes under the heading of making a decision and then making it the right decision.

Meanwhile, in Meldon class, the children have been learning about plants and have been growing their own vegetables. As part of their learning, they have had, unfortunately, to deal with a bit of a crime spree... They have been reading the book Supertato, which is, as you may guess, about a potato who is also a superhero who battles against evil pea, who, as you may have also guessed, is a pea who is a bit of a baddie. There was some evidence that evil pea had been up to his tricks and had taken the children's vegetables hostage. The children investigated and asked Mrs Teeder, their teacher, to call the police and asked me to let them know if they had caught evil pea. (The good thing about being in socially distanced bubbles is that, when asked to take part in a bit of subterfuge, you don't actually have to tell lies to the little children's faces, you can pretend you have phoned the police and you can send a message rather than telling them in person). Anyway, in the absence of any results from the police, the children had to build their own traps to catch evil pea. All the traps were successful and a surprising number of evil peas were caught overnight. You will be pleased to hear that the peas have been returned to the freezer where many think they belong... permanently! The children also created their own Supertatos but unfortunately I don't have a photo of them as they are a bit shy but, as I have seen, very sweet.....

Fr. Francis' thoughts on resuming the public celebration of Holy Mass.

I'm sure we all welcome the relaxation of restrictions on places of worship. The Bishops have announced that the Faithful may attend Holy Mass again from 4th July. The Archbishops have written a letter about this which is available at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/archbishops-letter-on-resumption-of-collective-worship/>

Of particular relevance to planning for the immediate future are these words:

"...It is important to reaffirm that, at present, the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains suspended. A significant number of churches may remain closed as they are unable to meet the requirements for opening... Fulfilling these requirements is a precondition for any church opening after the 4th July for the celebration of Mass with a congregation. Please be aware that there will be a limit on the number of people who can attend Mass in our churches. This will be determined locally in accordance with social distancing requirements. We therefore need to reflect carefully on how and when we might be able to attend Mass. We cannot return immediately to our customary practices. This next step is not, in any sense, a moment when we are going 'back to normal'.

We ask every Catholic to think carefully about how and when they will return to Mass... Given there is no Sunday obligation, we ask you to consider the possibility of attending Mass on a weekday. This will ease the pressure of numbers for Sunday celebrations and allow a gradual return to the Eucharist for more people...

...When we return to Mass there will be some differences in how the celebration takes place. For the time being, there will be no congregational singing and Mass will be shorter than usual..."

Some of the issues which the guidance from the Government and the Bishops raise are:

1. In the table below you will see the COVID SECURE capacity (not including the monks) of each of the churches in this parish. No more than that number can attend any given Mass.
2. This is a particular challenge in the Abbey church as it is so well known and visited by many people who are not parishioners. My blood runs cold at the thought of having to stand at the door of the church and turn someone away from Mass. So we need to find a way of agreeing who will attend each Mass, because we would be breaking the law if we allowed more people than is safe to enter.
3. The other issue which is particular to the Abbey church is that it is used by the monastic community for prayer five times a day. As a large proportion of the community are in the 'very vulnerable' category, it is essential that steps are taken so that the risk of their catching the virus is kept to a minimum.
4. It is a requirement of the Bishops that each Mass attended by a congregation is managed by stewards who must carry out the following functions:
 - a. Ensure that no more than the COVID SECURE capacity of the building attend the Mass
 - b. Make sure those who attend
 - i. sanitise their hands on entry using sanitiser containing more than 60% alcohol
 - ii. sit only in the designated places
 - iii. Maintain social distancing, including when receiving Holy Communion
 - c. Keep surfaces clean in accordance with government instructions
5. The Bishops' instruction is that a priest may decide to increase the capacity of a church by reducing social distancing from the 2 metre minimum to the '1 metre plus' minimum, but if he does, the wearing of face masks by the entire congregation becomes mandatory.
6. Government guidance continues to be: *"Certain groups of people may be at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19, including people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions. Individuals who fall within this group are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if they do go out, to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their household."*
7. A final issue peculiar to the Abbey church is that it is normally visited by many thousands of people a year. Our staff are currently working very hard on risk assessments, safety measures and training to enable a limited reopening of the site. We hope this will be possible from Wednesday 8th July. It would be impossible to manage a safe opening of the Abbey church for worship alone before that date.

I need to recruit people from each worshipping community to act as stewards in their church. Church guidance is that these people should be less than 70 years of age and free from any health condition which makes them particularly vulnerable. If I am able to do that, and taking all the above issues into account, I am hopeful that Holy Mass will be celebrated with a congregation at the following times and places:

Day	Time	Place	Capacity
Saturday July 4 th	5 p.m.	St. Benedict's Buckfastleigh	12
Sunday July 5 th	9 a.m.	St. Dunstan's South Brent	12
	10.30 a.m.	Our Lady of Lourdes & St. Petrock, Ashburton	12
Thereafter:			
Monday – Saturday	12 noon	Abbey Blessed Sacrament Chapel	24
Saturday	5 p.m.	Buckfastleigh	12
Sunday	9 a.m.	South Brent & Abbey Blessed Sacrament Chapel	12 24
	10:30 a.m.	Ashburton & The Abbey Church	12 30

The 9 a.m. Mass Monday to Friday will not be open to a congregation for the time being.

Live streaming of Holy Mass and the Divine Office will continue as now.

In next week's newsletter I will describe how the celebration of Holy Mass will differ from what you have been used to. The Bishops are making these temporary changes to minimise the risk of transmission of the virus.

Priority at each church given to regular worshippers in rotation. To attend a Mass, you will need to email or phone a specific number at the Abbey in advance. When capacity is reached for that Mass, a notice will be posted on the Abbey website and parish Facebook